




## MEMORANDUM

TO: Anthony J. Snipes, Chief of Staff

FROM: Rondella M. Hawkins, Officer   
Telecommunications & Regulatory Affairs

DATE: March 15, 2012

SUBJECT: 2012-13 Grant for Technology Opportunities (GTOPs) Awardees

I am writing to request your approval to proceed with the 2012 Grant for Technology Opportunities Program (GTOPs), specifically to negotiate and execute contracts with the grant awardees, as recommended by the Austin Community Technology & Telecommunications Commission on March 14, 2012.

### GRANT PROGRAM PURPOSE

The GTOPs program provides matching funds to Austin organizations and citizens' groups for projects focusing on use of information technology and connecting our citizens with computers and the Internet. The goals of the program are to:

- Support programs that provide public access to computers and information technology, especially among underserved segments of our community.
- Support programs that provide information technology literacy, education, and training.
- Support programs that use information and communication technologies in innovative ways that serve the community.
- Provide seed funding for Austin community and non-profit organizations for their technological outreach efforts.

### AWARDEE SELECTION PROCESS

Applications for the 2012 grant were accepted through December 9, 2011. The Austin Community Technology & Telecommunications Commission appointed a review board comprised of six qualified community representatives. The City received a total of thirty-seven (37) applications. The review board eliminated sixteen (16) applicants who were clearly not a fit with the program. The review board scored the remaining twenty-one (21) applicants based on the selection criteria outlined by the Commission including: the ability of the project to reduce disparities and increase technology access and/or literacy, project feasibility, community involvement, community benefit, and a clear plan for success. The applicants were given the opportunity to give a short oral presentation to the review board, followed by a question and answer session. After the final scores were tallied and discussed, the review board voted on their final recommendations for full and partial awards.

On March 14, 2012 the Austin Community Technology & Telecommunications Commission voted to accept the review board's recommendations. Upon your approval, the \$175,000 allocated by City Council for FY 2011-12 will be awarded to the following eight (8) awardees as follows:

**Austin Children's Museum- \$25,305.00, 100% of request**

GTOPs will support Tech Reach, a technology-based outreach program providing children from low-income backgrounds with access to digital technology and high quality instruction on how to apply that technology. Support from the GTOPs program has allowed ACM to build upon the success of this program over the past 3 years.

**Austin Film Society- \$16,000.00, 80% of request**

GTOPs will provide funding to the AFS Film Club, an after school program providing digital media workshops at fourteen under-resourced AISD schools. Since 2004, this program has engaged hundreds of disadvantaged students, equipping them with vital 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in digital media and nurturing their ability to observe and interpret the world around them.

**Austin Free-Net- \$23,985.00, 80% of request**

GTOPs will provide funding for the "Connecting Worlds" program to provide 200 hours of free computer literacy training to refugees of war-torn countries resettled in Austin, Texas. Together with the Multicultural Refugee Coalition, we will provide vital skills to this vulnerable population.

**Austin Speech Labs- \$26,100.00, 100% of request**

GTOPs will provide funding for alternate communication, cognitive skills and verbal skills training through intensive speech language therapy using computers for underserved and uninsured stroke and brain injured survivors across different levels of severity. ASL's goal is to help stroke survivors express ideas and thoughts and re-engage in their society.

**Girlstart- \$15,280.00, 80% of request**

GTOPs will support need-based scholarships to high-need Girlstart Summer Camp attendees. Summer Camps are thematic, week-long STEM experiences for girls in the 3<sup>rd</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> grades. Girlstart Summer Camp builds STEM skills and increase participants' interest in STEM subjects and careers through hands-on technology opportunities and access.

**Literacy Coalition of Central Texas- \$18,915.00, 70% of request**

GTOPs will support the Learner Web Project, a collaborative, technology-based project that provides low-income, underserved adults in Austin with free access to online, individually-customized lesson plans that enhance job readiness skills. Learners work with trained tutors to improve their digital literacy skills and are connected with local career education and training programs.

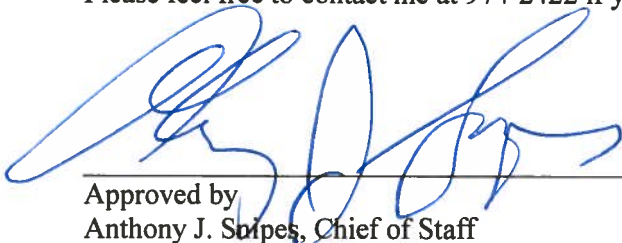
**Skillpoint Alliance- \$27,000.00, 90% of request**

GTOPs will support the Mobile Computer Training Center, expanding Skillpoint's Gateway and Community Technology Training Center (CTTC) programs to reach more participants throughout Austin and ensure participants have the technology skills needed to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Texas Folklife Resources- \$22,415.00, 70% of request**

GTOPs will support "Stories from Deep in the Heart" which is an educational collaboration with Austin Independent School District and KUT-FM in which students and teachers are trained to produce short documentaries about their own communities for public radio.

Please feel free to contact me at 974-2422 if you need additional information.



Approved by  
Anthony J. Solipes, Chief of Staff

3/19/12  
Date